

# Get to the Root of It!

## Tutorial 4

Holy Communion  
in the Armenian Church  
Stage 1 - Greet Each Other

Year of Church and Home 2007

## 8 Stages of Holy Communion

1. Greet Each Other
2. Remember why we are gathered
3. Give Thanks
4. Pray for our Spiritual Family
5. Praise the Hosts
6. Clean up before Eating
7. Eat/Take Communion
8. Say Thanks and Goodbye

In this tutorial we will go over the first stage of Holy Communion. As we saw in Tutorial 1, the Lord's Supper may be viewed as having several stages that form a coherent whole and serve as a framework for Holy Communion in the Armenian and other Christian churches. For example, We greet each other, we pray before we eat, we eat, then we say thanks and goodbye.

## 8 Stages of Communion - Intermediate Stages

1. Greet Each Other
2. Remember why we are gathered
3. Give Thanks
4. Pray for our Spiritual Family
5. Praise the Hosts
6. Clean up before Eating
7. Eat/Take Communion
8. Say Thanks and Goodbye

In addition, we can discern four intermediate stages: after saying hello and before going to the table, we remember why we are gathered and give thanks. Before eating, we praise our hosts and clean up before eating. Thus it forms a logical sequence from Greeting to Goodbye.

## Stage 1 Greeting

1. Invitation for Christened to Enter
2. Entrance Hymn - *Marmin Derunagan*
3. Psalm 24 - Lifting Up the Gates
4. Angels Ode
5. Peace Blessing
6. Kiss of Peace
7. Standing before the Lamb of God

Stage 1 starts with the Deacon's invitation to the christened to enter the sanctuary for communion. In accordance with ancient tradition, at this point the Bread and Wine, the Body and Blood of Christ, are brought in and set on the Holy Table. While this takes place, the people sing the Entrance Hymn - Body and Blood of Christ, followed by the Angels Ode, reminding us of the company of the Angels during the service. Then, the Deacon raises the veiled cup of wine, while reciting Psalm 24, hailing the entrance of the King of Glory. followed by the Peace Blessing, showing that the King of Peace reigns in the church; then comes the Kiss of Peace, during which each member of the congregation greets another, confirming that Christ has appeared among us. After this, we stand in awe before the Immortal Lamb of God.

## Active Texts in Green

5. Peace Blessing - Peace unto all -- **and with your spirit**  
Let us bow to God -- **before you Lord**
6. Kiss of Peace - Greet each other with a kiss of peace  
**Christ has appeared among us!**  
**Blessed is the appearance of Christ**
7. Let us stand in awe, let us stand in fear of the Lord. Christ offers himself, the innocent Lamb of God.

First let's go over the key texts in English. It's only about 75 words long, of which you need to have active command of only 4 sentences in order to participate in this part of the service. Those are the Peace Blessing "and with your spirit", "before you, Lord", and the Kiss of Peace Greeting, "Christ has appeared among us! Blessed is the appearance of Christ."

## Let's Go Over the Active Parts

- Peace Blessing

*Yev ěnt hokvuyt kum.*

*Arachi ko, Der*

Kiss of Peace

*Krisdos i mech mer haydnetsav*

*Orhnyal e haydnutyunn Krisdosi.*

These are four of the seven sentences you need to be able to say in order to actively engage in Holy Communion in Church Armenian. The first two should be familiar from the introductory tutorial. They are the responses from the Peace Blessing. Listen to them in context. 'Peace unto all.' *Khaghahutyun amenetsun.* 'And with your spirit.' *Yev ěnt hokvuyt kum.* 'Let us bow before God.' *Asdudzo yergrbakestsuk.* 'Before you, Lord.' *Arachi ko, Der.* Now you respond. Խաղաղութիւն ամենեցուն: . . . Աստուծոյ երկրպագեսցուք:

## Let's Go Over the Active Parts

Kiss of Peace

Քրիստոս ի մէջ մեր յայտնեցաւ:

*Krisdos i mech mer haydnetsav*

Christ in midst our appeared.

Օրհնեալ է յայտնութիւնն Քրիստոսի:

*Orhnyal e haydnutyunn Krisdosi.*

**Blessed is the appearance of Christ.**

Now let's go over the Kiss of Peace. The greeter says, 'Christ has appeared among us.' And the other responds, 'Blessed is the appearance of Christ.' These words are accompanied by actions.

Sometimes the greeter shakes hands with the person greeted; other times the greeter puts his/her right hand on his/her heart. Sometimes, people put their right hand on their heart and left hand on the shoulder of the person greeted. Usually, the greeter leans toward the person's left, gives the greeting into the person's left ear, and then steps back, and the respondent gives the response into the greeter's left ear. Finally, in some places, there is a final lean to the right, to complete the kiss of peace with a third bowing motion, signifying the Trinity.

## Kiss of Peace - Greeting

*Krisdos i mech mer haydnetsav.*

*Christ in midst of-us appeared.*

Քրիստոս ի մէջ մեր յայտնեցաւ:

- **Krisdos** 'Christ' ⇨ **chrism**, **grease**, anointed with oil, the chosen one.
- *i mech* = 'in midst' ⇨ **middle**, as in Brit. Eng. **imejitly** (for immediately)
- *mer* = 'us' ⇨ Ger. *unser*, Latin *noster*.
- *haydn-ets-av* = 'appeared'.

• *Krisdos* = 'Christ' Armenian *Krisdos* is related to Greek and English *Christ*, and means the 'anointed one', called in Hebrew, the Messiah, that is the one who was chosen and marked by God by being sealed with oil on his head. *Christ* is related to *chrism* and English *cream* 'lotion'.

• *i mech* = 'in midst'. The preposition *i* is related to English and Latin *in*. *Mech* is related to *middle*, *medium*. The *d* at the end of this root became *ch*, as in rapid British English pronunciation *imejitly* for *immediately*.

• *Mer* = 'of us', as we saw in the introduction, *mer* is related to English *us*, German *unser*, Latin *noster*.

• *haydnetsav* = 'appeared', is the final word of the Greeting. *Haydnetsav* comes from *haydni* which means 'apparent, known' -*ets-* is a past suffix, and -*av* means 's/he acted by him/herself'. Thus, this means *He made himself known*, or *appeared*. It has no related English word, but it is related to the noun in the response - *haydnutyun*, which ends in the common Armenian, English and Latin noun suffix - *tion*. Let's say it word by word from the end. Repeat after me. *Haydnetsav, mer haydnetsav, i mech mer haydnetsav. Krisdos i mech mer haydnetsav.*



## Kiss of Peace - Response

*Օրհնեալ է յայտնուրթիւնն Քրիստոսի:*

*Orhnyal e haydnutyunn Krisdosi*

Blessed is appearance-the Christ-of.

- *Orhnyal* = 'blessed', where *yal* = *ed*.
- *e* = 'is', as in Eng. *is*, Lat. *est*, Fr. *est*
- *haydnutyunn* = 'appearance' -*tyun*=*tion*
- *Krisdosi* = 'of Christ' where *-i* suffix = 's, of'

The response to 'Christ appeared among us' *Krisdos i mech mer haydnetsav* is 'Blessed is the appearance of Christ' *Orhnyal e haydnutyunn Krisdosi*.

•The first word of the response, *orhnyal* 'blessed' is one of the most common in Church Armenian, made up of the root *orhn* 'bless' and the suffix *-yal* '-ed', which is used to make verbal adjectives called past participles.

•Another very common word is the verb *e*, 'is'. It is related to Eng. *is*, Latin *est*, and Fr. *est*, which although written *e-s-t* in French, is pronounced *e* as in Armenian. In Armenian, this verb is written with the 7th letter of the Armenian alphabet, *Է*, which is often found on the arches of Armenian Churches, referring to 'God, the one who is'.

•*Haydnutyunn* is the noun form of *haydnetsav* 'appeared', and has two suffixes *utyun* which parallels English and Latin *-tion*, and *-n*, which means 'the one by him/her' or 'yon'

•Finally, the word *Krisdosi* is made up of the root *Krisdos* and the ending *-i*, which means *of*, 's'. Now let's practice it from the end. *Krisdosi, haydnutyunn Krisdosi, Orhnyal e haydnutyunn Krisdosi*. Practice it in context: *Krisdos i mech mer haydnetsav. Orhnyal e haydnutyunn Krisdosi*.

## Stage 1 Greet Each Other

- Entry into the Sanctuary
- Place of Peace and Harmony
- Christ's entry – reminds us that this is a place of peace and harmony, where we set aside our differences in reverence for Christ
- Angels Ode – worshippers sing in harmony with the Angels and God, our Creator graciously accepts our voices lifted in praise.
- Priest gives Peace Blessing
- Congregation greets each other with Kiss of Peace

Now that we've gone over the active parts of this stage of Holy Communion when we Greet Each Other, let's put them into context. In very early times, the Communion Service was part of a larger instructional gathering and meal for the poor and the faithful. In the Armenian Church, we have a special part of the church, the Gavit or anteroom, where people would gather for fellowship and instruction before and after entering the sanctuary for communion. The Sanctuary was a place of peace, where the people set aside their differences in reverence for Christ and joined together with the angels and each other to worship God.

## Entering the Sanctuary

- Reconciled and at peace before entering Sanctuary
  - As Christ taught, "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift." (Mt 5:23-5)
- Church a gathering of friends and neighbors
- Parish from Greek *para + oikos* 'near the house'
  - Eng. *parochial*.

As a sacred place, the Church was a gathering of friends. As Christ taught, "Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift." (Matthew 5:23-25). The Church is a gathering of family, friends and neighbors. People are part of a parish, which comes from the Greek *para + oikos* 'near the house', as in Eng. *parochial*.

## Cognate Key

- **ĕnger** ընկեր = *ĕnt* 'with' + *ger* 'eat' = companions (*com* = 'with', *pan* = 'bread')
- **paregam** բարեկամ = *pari* 'good' + *gam* 'wish' => 'well wishers', Christ's birth brought tidings of great joy to people of good will (Lk. 2:14)
- **ĕndanik** ընտանիք = *ĕnt* 'under' + *danik* 'roof' = family, brothers and sisters gathered in and for Christ under the same roof.
- **vegegghetsi** եկեղեցի from Greek *ecclesia* = 'gathering, people called forth', as in for example, *ecclesiastical*.

Let's pause a moment to look at some words related to gathering together. Understanding their origin sheds light on the significance of the Christian gathering for Communion. In Armenian, we have two words for *friend*, both of which are applicable here. *ĕnger* = 'companion, someone who eats with you, breaks bread with you', *com* = 'with', *pan* = 'bread' (cf. French *pain*, Latin *panis*). Also it is a place where people of good will gather, *paregam* – *pari* = 'good', *gam* = 'wish'. And they act like a family of brothers and sisters, *ĕndanik* – 'under the same roof'. Hence, it is a place of peace, differences are checked at the door. Inside the church, the gathering in Christ, there is peace and harmony. Let's look at this more closely.

## Invitation to Enter Sanctuary

- Deacon's invitation
  - Only the christened may enter
  - Մի ոք յերախայից *Mi vok herakhayits*
- Deacons acting on behalf of the people bring in Bread and Wine, singing the Hymn *Body of the Lord*
- Մարմին Տէրունական *Marmin Derunagan*

The Deacons, who help direct and organize the service activities, start this section with an invitation to those who are christened to enter the church. Listen:

Then, the deacons acting on behalf of the people enter with the Bread and Wine, singing the Hymn Body of the Lord.

## Invitation to Enter

- 'Only the christened may partake of communion'.

մի ոք յերախայից

*Mi vok herakhayits*

no person unbaptised-of

Listen to the deacon chant this invitation into the sanctuary.

•*Mi* means 'don't', as in the Lord's Prayer, *mi danir zmez i portsutyun* 'Lead us not into temptation'.

•*vok* means 'who, person' and is related to English *who* and Latin *quo*.

•The last word - *herakhayits* actually has a prefix and a suffix. The prefix is *h-* and the suffix is *-its*. Together this prefix and suffix mean 'of, out of'. So literally this means "none of the unbaptised", or put more positively, 'only the christened' *Christened* refers to those christened in the Armenian Church or another church in communion with the Armenian Church (Check with your priest if you have any questions).

## Angels Ode

- The Angels Ode is a choir solo
- Sung while the curtain is closed
- God's willingness to accept our meager offerings, despite being surrounded by the perfect glorification of the angels

The Angels Ode is a choir solo, sung while the curtain is closed. It invokes the presence of the angels, while stressing the mystery of God's willingness to accept our meager offerings of prayer and songs despite being perpetually surrounded by the perfect glorification of the angels.

Listen to this excerpt from the Angels Ode.

## Christ's Entry into the Sanctuary

- Bread & Wine, Body and Blood of Christ brought
- Angels Ode
- Entrance of Christ, the King of Glory, with Psalm 24

As the Bread and Wine, the Body and Blood of Christ, are brought in and placed on the Holy Table, we hear the Angels Ode. Then the Priest and Deacon, holding the Cup of Wine, announce the entrance of Christ, the King of Glory, with Psalm 24.



## Peace unto All

- Priest gives Peace Blessing, as Prince of Peace has entered:

*Khaghaghutyun amenetsun:*

*Yev ěnt hokvuyt kum:*

*Asdudzo yergrbakestsuk:*

*Arachi ko, Der:*

- The first of 3 times during Holy Communion.

When the Prince of Peace, Christ, has entered, we receive the Peace Blessing from the Priest. The first of 3 times during Holy Communion.

## Kiss of Peace

- Ancient custom of early church:
- "Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you." (Rom. 16:16)
- Also, 1 Cor. 16:20, 2 Cor. 13:12, 1 Thes. 5:26

A very ancient custom from the Early Christian communities was to greet each other with the Kiss of Peace. This practice is described in Romans 16:16 – "Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you". 1 Corinthians 16:20, 2 Corinthians 13:12, and 1 Thessalonians 5:26. The Kiss of Peace is easy and takes place during the Hymn by the same name, *Krisdos i mech mer haydnetsav*, 'Christ is revealed among us', which confirms the Presence of Christ among us when people of good will are gathered to praise God.

## Kiss of Peace - New Testament

- Romans 16:16
- 1 Corinthians 16:20
- 2 Corinthians 13:12
- 1 Thessalonians 5:26

## Քրիստոս ի մէջ մեր յայտնեցաւ

- Listen as the deacon bids us to greet each other in Christ.

**Deacon:** Ողջոյն տուք միմեանց ի համբոյր սրբութեան:

*Voghchuyn duk mimyants i hampuyr srputyan.*

- **Salutation** and **voghchuyn** are actually related, meaning, '**health, solid**'.
- When we greet someone, we affirm them and their likeness to us as beings created in the image of God.

Listen as the Deacon bids us to greet each other in Christ:

In Old Armenian, a common greeting was *voghch ler* – 'Be well', as in Latin, *Salve*. The priest gives the Greeting to the Deacon, who gives it to the congregation, who pass the greeting or salutation along, one to another, until it is transmitted through the whole gathering.

## Greeting Practice

Greeting:

- *Kris-dos i mech mer haydnetsav.*  
Christ in our midst appeared.

Response

- *Orhnyal e haydnutyunn Krisdosi.*  
Blessed is appearance of Christ.

*Kris-dos i mech mer haydnetsav.*

While we greet each other, the hymn of the same name is sung. The hymn describes the spreading of the Holy Spirit through the congregation, turning us into one family, the body of Christ. The ties that bind us together are symbolically expressed in the passing of the greeting in a chain from one person to another.

## Let us stand in awe

Ահիւ կաացնոք, երկիւղիւ կաացնոք. Psalm 33:8.

*Ahiv gatstsuk, yergyughiv gatstsuk*

- կաացնոք *gats-tsuk* = 'let us stand' 'stand' + 'let us' (as in *yergrbakestsuk*).
- ահիւ *ah-iv* 'with fear' *ah* 'fear/awe' + *iv* = 'with'
- *երկիւղիւ yergyughiv* = 'with fear'

→ *yergyugh* related to *dino*

Eng./Gk. *dinosaur* 'a frightening lizard'

Eng./Gk. *du*>Arm. *yerg*, as in *yergu* 'two', *duo*;

*yergar* = duration, 'long'.

*yeduo* => *yewdu* => *yewku* => *yergu*.

Having greeted each other in Christ, with the Body and Blood of Christ, the Bread and Wine, on the Holy Table, the deacons bid us to stand in awe as the innocent Lamb of God offers himself for our salvation. Listen as the deacons chant Psalm 33:8.

The word *gats-tsuk* consists of the root *ga* 'stand' and the suffix *-tsuk* 'let us', which we have already seen in the Peace Blessing, *Asdudzo yergrbakestsuk* 'let us bow to God'.

•*Ahiv* comes from the root *ah* - meaning 'fear' and the ending *iv* meaning 'with',

•The other word for fear is *yergyugh*. The root of *yergyugh* is related to the *dino* in Eng./Greek dinosaur, which means literally, 'a *frightening* lizard'. This may seem startling at first, except that we have two more examples of this same correspondence, *yergu* = 'two' and *yergar*.

What apparently happened was first a helping vowel *ye-* was added to the beginning of the word to make the initial *dw* combination easier to pronounce (as in English *school*, Fr. *ecole*, Sp. *escuela*). Then, the order of the *dw* switched and became *rg yeduo* => *yewdu* => *yewku* => *yergu*.

## Christ Offers Himself, the innocent Lamb of God (John 1:29)

Պատարագ Քրիստոս մատչի անարատ գառն Աստուծոյ:  
*Badarak Krisdos madchi anarad karn Asdudzo.*

- պատարագ *badarak* = 'offering'
- մատչի *madchi* = 'be offered'
  - ⇨ 'meet, bring near' also Arm. *mod*.
- անարատ *an-arad* = 'not' 'spot'
  - ⇨ innocent.
- գառն *karn* = 'ward' 'lamb'  
(k/g~w/v correspondence *kini*, *wine*)
- *Asdudz-o* = God 'of'

Listen as the Deacons, using a phrase from the Gospel of John (1:29), announce the culmination of this stage of the Holy Communion service. Christ offers himself, the innocent Lamb of God.

As you know from the introduction, the entire Sunday service, of which Holy Communion is a part, is called Badarak in Armenian.

• *Badarak* is a word of Persian origin meaning 'sacrifice'. Christ laid down his life, sacrificed himself, to save his friends, those who share his good will and believe in him. Self-sacrifice, putting others' needs ahead of one's own, is an expression of love.

• The verb *madchi* is related to the English word *meet* and the Armenian word *mod* meaning 'near'. When something is offered, it is brought near.

• *an-arad* - means 'spotless or innocent', referring to the one who did no wrong to deserve punishment, but was perfect and therefore a worthy sacrifice. The prefix *an-* means 'not'.

• The word *karn* means 'lamb', but it literally means 'ward, ware', that is, something that is 'cared for, guarded'. This word exhibits the k/g~w correspondence, which we see in the pair of English words *ward*, *guard* and many Armenian and English pairs of words, for example, Arm. *kini* Eng. *wine*. Thus, lambs are wards to be protected by the shepherd. As Jesus told Peter after the Resurrection: "Feed my lambs". (John 21:15)

• Finally, the word *asdudzo* is composed of the root *Asdvadz* and the ending *-o*, which means 'of'.

## Stage 1 - Greet Each Other - Recap

1. Invitation for Christened to Enter
2. Entrance Hymn - *Marmin Derunagan*
3. Psalm 24 - Lifting Up the Gates
4. Angels Ode
5. Peace Blessing
6. Kiss of Peace
7. Standing before the Lamb of God

So to recap, in this stage, 1. the Christened are invited to enter the sanctuary (mi vok herakhayits), 2. the Bread and Wine are brought to the Altar with the hymn *Marmin Derunagan* Body and Blood of the Lord, 3. after which the Priest and Deacon announce the entry of Christ, the King of Glory, with Psalm 24. 4. Next, with the curtain closed, the Angels Ode is sung reminding us of the presence of the angels wherever Christ is, 5. The priest then gives the Peace Blessing and 6. Kiss of Peace to people, who by the end of the section find themselves 7. standing before the Christ, the Lamb of God, who offers Himself, for our salvation.



## 8 Stages of Communion - Intermediate Stages

1. Greet Each Other
2. Remember why we are gathered
3. Give Thanks
4. Pray for our Spiritual Family
5. Praise the Hosts
6. Clean up before Eating
7. Eat/Take Communion
8. Say Thanks and Goodbye

Now that we have greeted each other and the Bread and Wine are on the Holy Table, we will turn to the next stage, Stage 2 - "Remember why we are gathered" in the next tutorial.